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Urban District Council of Norton-Radstock.

Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health
for the year ended 31st December, 1950.

To the Chairman and Members of the Norton-Radstock Urban District Council.

Gentlemen,

I have the honour to submit my annual report on the sanitary conditions and health of your District for the year ended 31st December, 1950.

SECTION A.

(1)	Area (in acres)	3,360.
(2)	Population (estimated)	12,112.
(3)	Number of inhabited houses	3,525.
(4)	Rateable Value	£44,144.
(5)	Sum represented by a penny rate ...	£176.
(6)	Chief Industries:-	

Coal Mining
Agriculture
Paper Bag Making
Printing
Glove Making
Wagon Repair Works
Timber Constructional Works.

Unemployment.

There were, on the average, about 17 persons unemployed each week during the year (Males, 16; Females 1).

It is almost impossible to employ these people locally owing to their physical condition.

Prescribed particulars in the Administration of the Factories Act, 1937.

Part I of the Act.

(1) Inspections for purposes of provisions as to health (including inspections made by Sanitary Inspector).

Premises	Number on Register	Inspections.	Number of written notices.	Occupiers prosecuted.
(i) Factories in which Sections 1,2,3,4 & 6 are to be enforced by Local Authorities	44	36	0	0
(ii) Factories not included in (i) in which Section 7. is enforced by Local Authority	11	10	0	0
(iii) Other premises in which Section 7 is enforced by Local Authority (Excluding out-workers' premises)	0	0	0	0
TOTAL ...	55	46	0	0

(2) Cases in which defects were found:-

Particulars	Number of cases in which defects were found			
	Found	Remedied	Referred: To H.M. Inspector	Referred: By H.M. Inspector
Want of cleanliness	1	1	0	1
Overcrowding	0	0	0	0
Unreasonable temperature	0	0	0	0
Inadequate ventilation	0	0	0	0
Ineffective draining of floors	0	0	0	0
Sanitary Conveniences:-				
(a) Insufficient	0	0	0	0
(b) Unsuitable or defective	3	3	0	3
(c) Not separate for sexes	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	4	4	0	4

Number of cases in which prosecutions were instituted - NIL

Part VIII of the Act.
Outwork - Section 110 -

Nature of Work.	No. of Outworkers in August List required by Section 110(1)(c).
Wearing apparel making	122

Vital Statistics.

Births:	Total	Male	Female
Live Births:-			
Legitimate	90	54	36
Illegitimate	3	1	2
	93	55	38
Still Births:-			
Legitimate	3	1	2
Illegitimate	0	0	0
	3	1	2

The birth rate per 1,000 of the estimated population was 7.7.

Deaths.... Total 119. Male 60. Female 59.

Death rate per 1,000 of the estimated population ... 9.8
Death rate from Puerperal Causes ... 0
Death rate of infants under 1 year of age:-

All infants per 1,000 live births ... 32.5
Legitimate infants per 1,000 live births ... 32.5
Illegitimate infants per 1,000 live births ... 0.0

Deaths in infants under 1 year of age:-

Under 1 week 1
1 - 4 weeks 0
1 - 6 months 0
6 - 12 months 2

Causes of deaths in infants under 1 year of age:-

Disease of Kidneys	...	...	1
Congenital Malformation	...	...	1
Birth Injury	...	...	1

Deaths from Cancer (all ages)	...	...	14
Deaths from Measles	...	...	0
Deaths from Whooping Cough	...	...	0
Deaths from Diarrhoea (under 2 years)		...	0
Deaths from Diphtheria	...	...	0

Causes of Deaths were:-

	Male	Female
Cancer	4	10
Heart Disease	11	9
Cerebral Haemorrhage or Thrombosis	6	9
Other Circulatory Diseases	5	6
Pneumonia	2	1
Broncho Pneumonia	5	2
Bronchitis	3	3
Pulmonary Tuberculosis	4	0
Pneumoconiosis or Silicosis	7	0
Asthma	4	0
Pulmonary Embolism	0	2
Disease of Digestive System	1	1
Senility	0	1
Accident	2	1
Suicide	1	0
Birth Injury	0	1
Disease of Nervous System	1	1
Diabetes	1	4
Nephritis	2	6
Other Disease of the Kidneys	1	1
Rhuematoid Arthritis	0	1
	60	59

TOTAL - 119

SECTION B.

General provision of Health Services for the Area -

1. Public Health Officers of the Authority:-

   (a) Sanitary Inspector and Housing Officer.
   (b) Surveyor and Water Engineer.
   (c) Temporary Medical Officer of Health (Part-time)

2. (a) Laboratory Facilities - Provided by the County Laboratory, Taunton.

   (b) Ambulance Facilities - Under the control of the Health Department of the County Council, Taunton. The Service is excellent.

   A car service is also provided for those patients requiring transport to hospital and who are unfit to use public vehicles. The service works reasonably satisfactorily, but entails added clerical work by the family doctor.

   (c) Nursing in the Home.
   The District Nurses provide an excellent service.

   The Home Help Service is also of great value and fulfils an essential need.

(d) Treatment Centres and Clinics.

(i) Tuberculosis.

A satisfactory service is maintained under the County Council at Leigh House, Radstock. The bed shortage for tuberculosis cases is improving, but still severe. With improved therapy the demand for beds is not likely to lessen. The demand voiced in some quarters that this disease should be attacked on a national scale with increased vigour merits the fullest support.

(ii) Venereal Disease.

The nearest clinics are at Bath and Bristol. It is considered that the arrangements are adequate, especially as fresh cases are not common in this area.

(iii) Infant and Child Welfare Services.

Valuable work continues on the same unsuitable premises.

(iv) Maternity Services.

The maternity hospital is giving invaluable service to this area amongst others. The demand on the beds, which alread; exceeds supply, reflects the public esteem. The Nursing Services continue to give skilled attendance at home. Welfare of the mother and child depends on the nutritional standards being, at least, maintained.

(v) Dental Treatment.

Dental service for young children and expectant mothers is provided by the County Health Authority. It is not readily available in this area.

(vi) Mental Treatment.

The County Health Authority undertakes the supervision of the service for Mental Patients.

(vii) No action has been taken under the National Assistance Act, 1948.

(e) Hospital Cases.

Infectious cases needing removal are admitted to the Isolation Hospital, Claverton Down. No difficulty has been experienced in getting such cases admitted, the authorities concerned being very helpful.

Whilst acknowledging the magnificent work done by the hospitals, concern continues to be felt over the delay that is entailed in getting specialists' opinions for some cases, and in the very long waiting time before admission to hospital is possible. An improved system for obtaining admission for urgent cases is required. The present system of telephoning successive hospitals to beg admission of dire emergencies is dangerously time-consuming and exasperating.

It is also considered unfortunate that the speed of a patient's admission to hospital does not yet depend entirely on his medical needs.

SECTION C.

Sanitary circumstances of this area -

(1) Water.

The District is supplied from three sources:-

(i) The Bottlehead Springs at Downhead.
(ii) Downside and Gurney Slade Springs.
(iii) Chilcompton Springs.

The supply has been satisfactory suring the year, both in quality and quantity.

Bacteriological reports on the water untreated and after treatment were satisfactory.

The water has no plumbo-solvent action.
There was no form of contamination during the year.

Practically all houses have a direct piped supply.

Extension of public water supplies.
A short extension of 150 yards of 3" piping has been laid in Underhill Lane to a new building site.

Future proposals.
There are no definite proposals at present for further extensions.

(2) The opening of the new swimming bath is noted with great satisfaction. It is estimated that, on the average, two hundred people use it daily during the season.

(3) Sanitation.
Two modern sewage disposal plants serve this District, and on the whole it is well sewered. There has been an extension of a sewer to take drainage from the new pithead baths at Norton Hill Colliery. It is hoped it will soon be possible to sewer the Thicketmead area.

There are, in this area, 3,000 water closets and 20 pail closets.

(4) Housing.

	Houses erected during year		Houses in Course of Erection.		Conversion to flats and dwellings.		Temporary i.e. Army Huts etc.
	Perm:	Temp:	Perm:	Temp:	Perm:	Temp:	
Local Authority	0	0	72	0	0	0	0
Private Enterprise	9	0	1	0	1	0	0
TOTALS	9	0	73	0	1	0	0

No grants were made under the Housing Act, 1949. for either:-

(a) The conversion of houses to dwellings;
or (b) Improvement of dwellings.

Houses occupied that have been condemned as totally unfit ... 9

Number of houses found overcrowded 16

Houses Required.

(a) To replace those unfit 60
(b) To abate overcrowding 40
(c) Where conditions are unsatisfactory, e.g. 2 families living in the same house but not included in (a) or (b) 310

Total Number of applicants for Council houses at the end of the year 628

The housing position remains much the same. Houses are not being built in sufficient numbers to enable inroads to be made on existing bad conditions.

The housing situation continues to be the most urgent problem in in this District.

SECTION D.

A. Milk Supply.

(a) Total number of Registered Dairy Farms ... 8
(b) Total number of Distributors ... 15
(c) Number of Licenced Pasteurising Plants ... 1
(d) Number of supplementary licences issued to Dealers or Distributors whose dairy is outside this area 3

Milk Sampling.

Designation	Samples Taken	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
Pasteurised	66	63	3

It is thought that the amount of Tuberculin Tested Milk produced is on the increase. It is hoped that this will become universal.

The Somerset County Council undertakes the sampling of milk.

B. Meat.

Number of licensed Slaughter Houses in the District ... 0
Number of Registered Slaughter houses in the District ... 5
Number of Slaughter Houses in use where horses are slaughtered for human consumption ... 0
Names of any in use under the Ministry of Food ... 0
Slaughter houses registered in collaboration with the Ministry of Food for occasional slaughtering of pigs 5

It is only on comparatively rare occasions that any animals are slaughtered in this area.

Amounts totalling 6 cwt. of imported beef have been returned to the depot owing to bone-taint.

C. Ice Cream.

Number of premises registered for:-

(a) Manufacture and Retail ... 8
(b) Manufacture only 0
(c) Retail only 28

The methods used for distributing large manufacturer's products are considered satisfactory. With the small traders the majority of the premises are not well equipped with modern appliances.

19 samples taken for the fat content were satisfactory.

Sampling for bacterial content is still impracticable owing to the time factor in transit to the laboratory.

D. Restaurants and Canteens.

Inspection continues to reveal a very uneven standard of hygiene.

There have been no widespread outbreaks of food poisoning. Isolated cases of gastro enteritis are always occurring, probably due to errors in the home.

There appears to be a general sense of responsibility in the handling of foodstuffs, but there is amply scope for education. The attendance at the educational films on this subject was disappointing.

The adoption of the Model Byelaws Series I on the 16th October, 1950. is welcomed.

E. Adulteration.

No action has been taken under the Sales of Drugs Act.

F. Chemical and Bacteriological Examination of Food.

The County Council Laboratories at Taunton carry out any examination necessary.

G. Nutrition.

It is considered that the health and physique of the children on the whole, is satisfactory. Where, as an exception, this is not so, unfortunate home circumstances are the usual explanation. School meals and milk are an asset.

The present nutritional standards for all must, at least, be maintained.

SECTION E.

Notifiable Diseases.

Infectious diseases (excluding Tuberculosis) notified during the year:-

Disease	Total Cases Notified.	Cases admitted to Isolation Hospital	Total Deaths.
Measles	40	0	0
Scarlet Fever	9	4	0
Whooping Cough	54	0	0
Pneumonia	1	0	0
Acute Poliomyelitis	3	3	0

Vaccination.

No vaccinations have been performed by the Medical Officer of Health under the Public Health (Smallpox Prevention) Regulations, 1907.

Anxiety continues to be felt as the number of unprotected people in the nation increases.

Number of vaccinations:-

	Primary Vaccination	Revaccination.
Under 1 year	4	0
1 - 4 years	14	0
5 - 14 years	2	0
15 and over	11	6
TOTAL	31	6

Diphtheria

No cases were reported in this District.

Diphtheria Immunization.

Age	Primary Immunizations.
Under 5 years	128
5 - 14 years	18

Re-inforcing injections given during the year ... 145

Diphtheria Immunization (Contd.)

Estimated number of children in this District:-

Age		
0 - 4 years	...	900
5 - 14 years	...	1,430

Scabies.

The few cases that occur are treated by the family doctor.

Tuberculosis.

	Total cases notified	Total deaths.
Respiratory	9	4
Non-respiratory	5	0

My thanks are due to my colleagues for their great and essential assistance in preparing this report.

I have the honour to be,

Your obedient Servant

(Signed) A.H. BULLEID (DR.)